

# FIELD OBSERVATION OF SAFETY BELT USE IN WISCONSIN

## July 2006



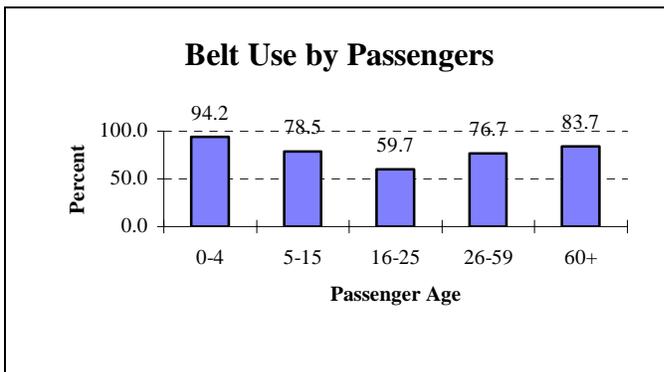
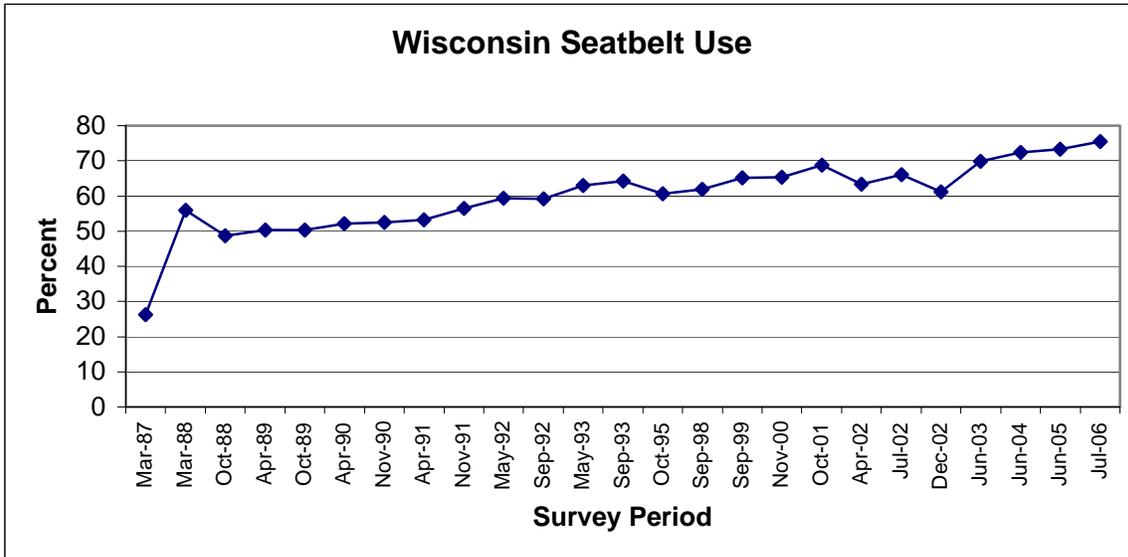
Since March 1987, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation has conducted periodic statewide observation surveys of safety belt use. Wisconsin enacted a mandatory safety belt law in December 1987 and a mandatory child safety seat law in May 1992.

### RESULTS

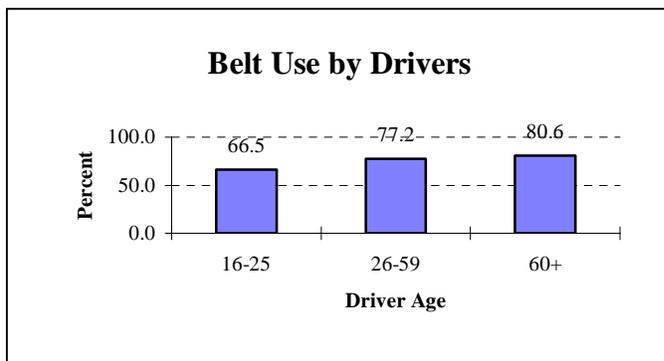
In July 2006, **75.4%** of passenger vehicle occupants (front outboard\*) used their safety belts.

\*Front outboard refers to the driver and the right front seat passenger.

(Note: The chronology on the graph is not to scale due to irregularity in collection dates.)



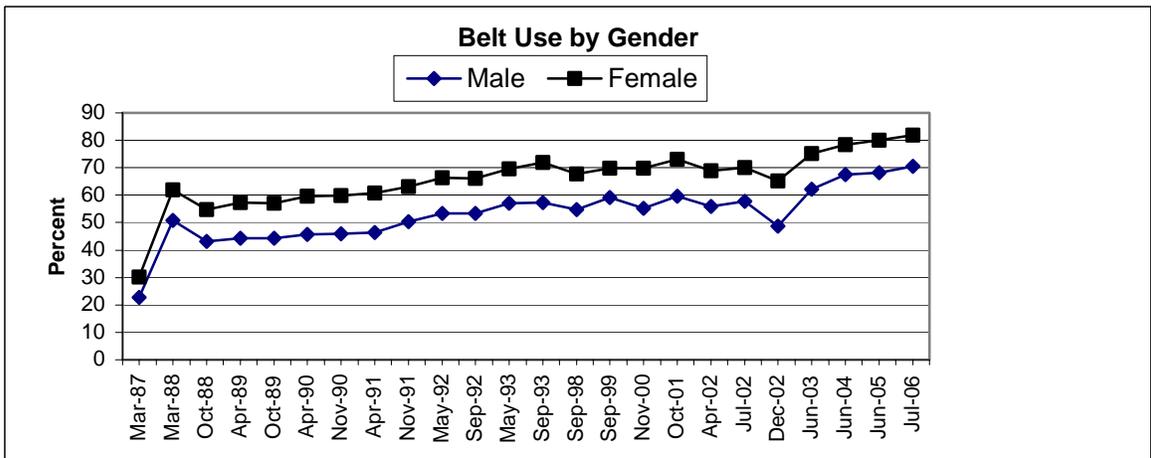
**Belt use is highest (94.2%) among children 0-4 years of age. This includes child safety seat use.** However, a 16-month, nationwide study completed in 2002 by the National Safe Kids Campaign showed that approximately 72.6% of child safety seats are used improperly in the vehicle, creating a situation where a child would be at increased risk of injury in the event of a crash. Please also note the enactment of **2005 Wisconsin Act 106**. This legislation broadly necessitates the use of booster seats for children from 4 through 7 years of age. The outcome of this statute will hopefully increase the percentage of belt use by passengers in the 5-15 age range statewide.



**Belt use is the lowest (66.5%) among drivers ages 16-25.** This group represents 16.2% of licensed drivers, yet accounted for 28.6% of drivers involved in crashes in 2005.

**Wisconsin has consistently displayed a gender difference of more than 10% in safety belt use.**

In the most recent survey, 81.8% of females wore their belts, while only 70.6% of males did.

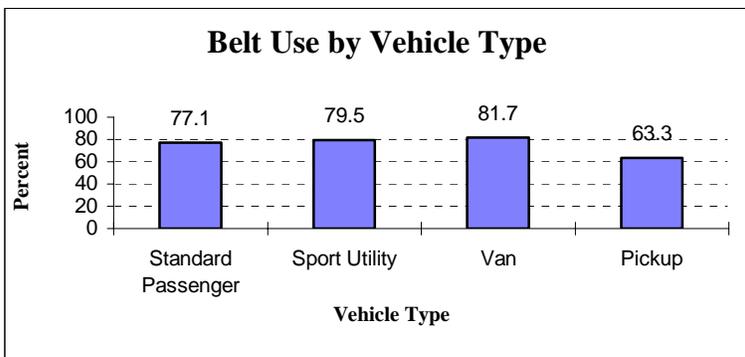
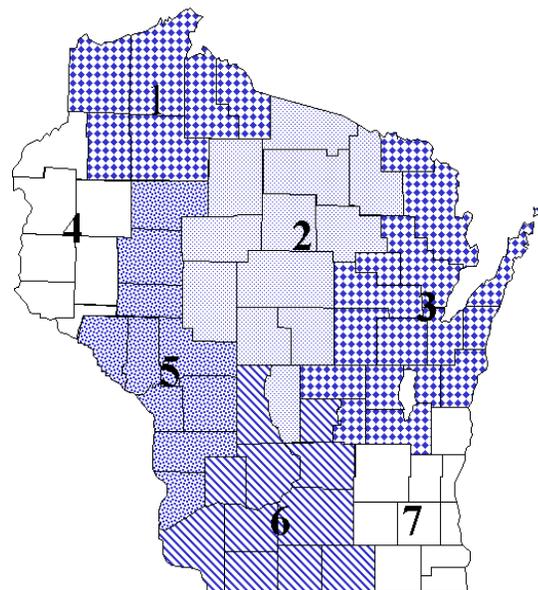


**Belt Use by Region**

Belt use varies by more than 6% across the state. The Green Bay/Appleton area is highest at 79.8%, and the Wausau/Rhineland area is lowest at 73.3%.

Region	Belt Usage 2006 (%)
1 Superior/Northern WI	74.9
2 Wausau/Rhineland	73.3
3 Green Bay/Appleton	79.8
4 Minneapolis/St. Paul	74.1
5 La Crosse/Eau Claire	73.9
6 Madison	77.4
7 Milwaukee	75.1

**Wisconsin Regions**



**Occupants of vans were most likely to be wearing their safety belts.** 81.7% of front seat van occupants wore safety belts.

**Occupants of pickup trucks were least likely to use their belts.** Little more than half (63.3%) of the occupants of pickup trucks wore safety belts.